

Message Text

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SUBJECT: COMMUNIST PARTY STATEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: STATE 42790

1. THE DISTRIBUTION OF CHARTER '77 PROVIDED STIMULATION FOR THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) TO MAKE SOME STATEMENTS ON THE SUBJECT OF DISSENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE FIRST OFFICIAL COMMENT APPEARED IN AN UNSIGNED COMMENTARY IN L'UNITA (PCI DAILY) JANUARY 12 IN REACTION TO A REPORT THAT FOUR SIGNERS OF CHARTER '77 HAD BEEN ARRESTED BY CZECHOSLOVAK AUTHORITIES. L'UNITA STATED THAT "THE NUMBER OF THOSE QUESTIONED IN THE COURSE OF A FEW DAYS, AND THE VIRULENCE OF THE ARTICLE IN RUDE PROVO DEDICATED TO THE DOCUMENT (CHARTER '77) AND TO ITS SIGNERS, LEAVES NO DOUBT ABOUT THE SPIRIT AND THE MANS WITH WHICH THE CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERS INTEND TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS POSED BY CHARTER '77, PROBLEMS THAT DESCEND FROM THE WOUNDS OF 1968 AND THAT STILL REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED." THE ARTICLE ADDS THAT "....REGARDING CZECHOSLOVAKIA THERE EXISTS, AND IT IS

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BEING AGGRAVATED, A PROBLEM REGARDING THE POLITICAL WILL OF THE RULERS. TO RESPOND TO A REQUEST FOR THE OPENING OF A DIALOGUE CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS WITH POLICE OPERATIONS, REPRESENTS A CHOICE THAT RATHER THAN SEEKING THE WAY OF RECONCILIATION FOR THE OVERCOMING OF UNHEALED FRACTURES, PROVIDES A DEEPENING OF THE DIVISIONS AND THE EXACERBATION OF

THE WOUNDS OPENED NINE YEARS AGO. IT IS A TENDENCY THAT WE FIRMLY DENOUNCE, PORTENDING FURTHER WOUNDS AND NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE NEEDS OF LIBERTY AND WITH THE IDEALS OF SOCIALISM."

2. SPEAKING IN ROME TO AN ASSEMBLY OF INTELLECTUALS THREE DAYS LATER, PCI SECRETARY GENERAL BERLINGUER SAID, "THIS APPROACH (ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND CREATIVITY), WHICH IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE MORE GLOBAL VIEW WE HAVE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM, DIFFERS FROM THAT OF SOME OF THE PARTIES IN POWER IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS SUCH AS THOSE ONE HEARS OF, FOR INSTANCE, IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, WHERE ONE IS ACTUALLY FACED WITH ACTIONS OF A REPRESSIVE NATURE, ARE ON PRINCIPLE UNACCEPTABLE FOR US. INTERPRETING THESE STANDS TAKEN BY THE PCI, SOME OF OUR INTELLECTUAL COMRADES HAVE DECIDED TO MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT WHICH WE CONSIDER JUST AND APPROPRIATE. AND IRRENOUNCEABLE PART OF OUR HERITAGE IS A CONCEPT WHICH RECOGNIZES THAT IT IS THE DUTY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, OF THE OTHER DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AND OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES TO CREATE A POLITICAL AND MORAL CLIMATE AND MATERIAL CONDITIONS THAT WILL PERMIT THE POSITIVE AND FULL DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH, OF INITIATIVES AND OF CULTURAL DEBATE. BUT IT IS NEITHER THE PARTIES' NOR THE STATE'S DUTY TO REQUIRE OBEDIENCE, TO MAKE CONCEPTS OF THE WORLD PREVAIL, TO LIMIT IN ANY WAY INTELLECTUAL FREEDOMS. YES, I WANT TO END MY STATEMENT WITH THE SERENE CONFIRMATION OF THIS APPROACH FROM WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WE SHALL NEVER DEPART."

3. IN A SPEECH AT MILAN ON JANUARY 28, BERLINGUER DWELT BRIEFLY WITH THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE. ADDRESSING A GROUP OF WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES, HE OBSERVED THAT " NO ONE IS ABLE TO NEGATE THE CLEAR CHARACTER AND THE LACK OF AMBIGUITY OF SOME OF OUR CRITICISMS OF CERTAIN ILLIBERAL TRAITS OF POLITICAL REGIMES OF SOME COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE. WE WISH TO UNDERSTAND THE REASONS FOR CERTAIN FACTS AND ATTITUDES. BUT, HAVING SAID THIS, WE RESPOND NO TO THOSE WHO WISH TO CARRY US TO A NEGATION, FOR EXAMPLE, OF THE DECISIVE HISTORICAL FUNCTION OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION, THE IRREVOCABLE CONQUESTS OF SOCIALIST SYSTEMS, THE SOCIALIST CHARACTER OF THE RELATIONSHIPS OF PRODUCTION THAT HAVE BEEN INDISPUTABLE ACHIEVED IN THESE COUNTRIES, AND THE ROLE THAT THESE COUNTRIES HAVE IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE."

4. COMMENT. DURING THE PAST SIX WEEKS THE PCI HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO WALK A TIGHTROPE IN ITS HANDLING OF THE QUESTION OF DISSENT IN EASTERN EUROPE. ON THE ONE HAND, FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES AND TACTICS IT FEELS ITSELF OBLIGED TO SPEAK OUT ON CERTAIN VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT APPARENTLY DESIRES TO AVOID IRRITATING EXCESSIVELY ITS RELATIONS WITH THE RULING PARTIES IN THESE COUNTRIES. IT IS EASY FOR THE PCI TO CRITICIZE SHARPLY ACTIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BECAUSE ITS RELATIONS WITH THE PCC HAVE BEEN BAD SINCE 1968. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE PCI SHOULD HAVE SPOKEN OUT IN A FORTHRIGHT MANNER ON REPRESSION OF SIGNERS OF CHARTER '77. HOWEVER, THE PCI HAS TREAD LIGHTLY IN MAKING COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC CEASES IN THE SOVIET UNION (I.E. GINZBURG OR ORLOV).

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5. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT FOR ITS OWN INTERNAL REASONS (PRIMARILY DISSATISFACTION AMONG A RATHER CONSERVATIVE BASE) THE PCI HAS BEEN MORE CAUTIOUS IN DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS. (SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS HAVE HINTED THAT THE NEW POSTURE IS RELATED TO THE JANUARY 28 MEETING IN MOSCOW BETWEEN PCI LEADER GIOVANNI CERVETTI AND CPSU FOREIGN SECTION CHIEF PONOMAREV.) PARTY LEADERS HAVE NOT PUBLICLY ADDRESSED THE SUBJECT DURING THIS PERIOD, AND L'UNITA HAS GENERALLY CONFINED ITSELF TO REPORTING ON EVENTS AS THEY OCCUR AND COMMENTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. IN THIS CONNECTION, L'UNITA HAS COVERED NOT ONLY PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE BUT ALSO SENATOR SPARKMAN'S CAUTIONARY WARNING ABOUT THE UTILITY OF THESE MOVES.BEAUDRY

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